



Novitates Gabonenses 21. A New Species of *Baphia*
(Leguminosae–Papilionoideae) from Gabon

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ABSTRACT. From Gabon, Central Africa, a new species of *Baphia* is described that is distinct in having a cymose arrangement of its flowers.

The African genus *Baphia*, with ca. 46 species in total, is well represented in Gabon by some 18 species (Soladoye, 1985). This number is likely to increase with further exploration, mainly by the collection of species previously known only from the neighboring countries. Recent collections from the Lambaréné area revealed a new, distinct species.

Baphia cymosa Breteler, sp. nov. TYPE: Gabon. Lambaréné, along Ogooué River, 24 Nov. 1986 (fl), *van der Maesen* 5306 (holotype, WAG; isotypes, BR, K, LBV, MO, P). Figure 1.

Baphiae laurifoliae Baillon affinis, sed inflorescentiis cymosis, bracteolis minoribus et alis et petalis carinae sine marsupio differt.

Treelet 3–4 m tall. Branches rather soon longitudinally fissured, bark peeling off in thin, long, narrow flakes. Branchlets densely brown-tomentose. Stipules not observed, very early caducous, leaving a rimlike scar. Leaves: petiole with contiguous pulvini, 5–10 mm long, grooved above, subappressed-short-brown-hairy; blade elliptic, 7–12 × 2–4 cm, (2.5–)3–4 times as long as wide, cuneate at base, obtusely acuminate at apex, the acumen 0.5–1 (–1.5) cm long, glabrous above, sparsely subappressed-short-hairy beneath, more densely so on midrib, glabrescent, lateral nerves thin, 5–7 pairs, not or only slightly prominent, the midrib plane to

impressed above, prominent beneath. Flowers mostly arranged in 2–several-flowered, once to repeatedly branched, brown-tomentose cymes, sometimes single; peduncle up to 2 cm long; bracts and bracteoles broadly ovate, concave, ca. 1.5 × 1.5 mm, mostly early caducous; flower buds somewhat sickle-shaped; pedicel up to ca. 2 cm long; calyx up to ca. 15 mm long, appressed-brown-short-hairy outside, glabrous inside, spathaceous, splitting down one side; corolla white, glabrous; standard ± sessile, broadly obovate, ca. 15 × 13 mm, ± flat, but with the margin in upper part curved inwards, with a 2–2.5-mm-long split apically; wings folded ± lengthwise, 17 × 8 mm when unfolded, very shortly clawed, top obtuse, notched or not; keel petals 13 × 5–7 mm, united in the middle, shortly clawed, ± flat; stamens 10–13.5 mm long, shortly coherent at base, glabrous, anthers 2.5–3 mm long, ± basifixed; pistil ca. 15 mm long, gently curved, style ± glabrous, ovary appressed-short-hairy, 6-ovuled. Fruits unknown.

Distribution. Only known from the type locality in Gabon.

Habitat. Tropical rainforest.

Baphia cymosa is distinct because of a unique character, i.e., the arrangement of the flowers in cymes and not in fascicles, racemes, or pseudoracemes, the normal situation in *Baphia*. In the key in Soladoye's (1985) revision, *B. cymosa* will key out near *B. laurifolia* Baillon when "pulvini not contiguous" is selected at couplet 22. This might seem to be the wrong choice because *B. cymosa* has contiguous pulvini; however, according to Soladoye's description, so, possibly, does *B. laurifolia*.



Figure 1. 1-11. *Baphia cymosa* Breteler (van der Maesen 5306). —1. Flowering branchlet. —2, 3. Part of inflorescence. —4. Flower bud with bracteoles. —5. Flower. —6. Standard inside. —7. Wing from inside. —8. Wing from outside. —9. Keel petals. —10. Androecium. —11. Pistil. Drawn by Paul Albers.

In fact, ca. 90% of the collections in WAG have contiguous pulvini. The other choice at couplet 22, “pulvini contiguous,” is worse because it leads to *B. buettneri* Harms and *B. gossweileri* Baker f., two completely different species.

From *B. laurifolia* the new species also differs

by the smaller bracteoles and by the absence of pockets in the wings and in the keel petals.

Literature Cited

Soladoye, M. O. 1985. A revision of *Baphia* (Leguminosae-Papilionoideae). Kew Bull. 40(2): 291–386.